



Charlotte City Council
Workforce & Business Development Committee
Summary
September 28, 2020

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

Workforce Development Committee Referrals Discussion (No Action Required)
Open for Business Update (No Action Required)
Workforce & Business Development Committee 2020 Annual Reports (No Action Required)

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Committee Members Present: James Mitchell (Chair), Tariq Bokhari (Vice Chair), Dimple Ajmera, Malcolm Graham and Renee Johnson

Others: Councilmember Victoria Watlington
Denada Jackson, Office of Constituent Services

Guests: Scott Darnell, ED Special Projects Consultant

Staff Resource: Tracy Dodson, City Manager's Office
Fran West, Economic Development

Meeting Duration: 1:30pm-3:31pm

ATTACHMENTS

1. Agenda – September 28, 2020
2. Presentations – Workforce & Business Innovation
3. Handouts – CIC Annual Report 2019-2020; FY20 Public Art Commission Report

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Chairman Mitchell called the virtual meeting to order and asked Committee members, City staff and guests to introduce themselves. He then turned the meeting over to Assistant City Manager Tracy Dodson to introduce the agenda topics.

Workforce Development Committee Referrals Discussion

The Committee continued discussions as a follow-up to the September 14th meeting on committee referrals related to workforce development and the City's role around a policy framework to be presented at the October 5th City Council Safe Communities Report Out Session.

Fran West gave an overview of options to address unemployment and what the City could do to implement a comprehensive job strategy to inform and guide the City's work to eliminate barriers for people in high unemployment zip codes around the City. This strategy will align with other city-wide plans already implemented to address housing and transportation.

Key Points of Discussion Included:

Corridor labor market data

- Historically high unemployment exists in specific areas of our City
- Data indicates that many of our unemployed face barriers to employment
- We need to better understand who is unemployed, why and where their best opportunity is for job placement- which will yield customized solutions.

Charlotte Works & workforce system

- We have a robust workforce development ecosystem that is serving our community in a variety of ways.
- The City needs to continue to bring job opportunities to our residents and connect our workforce partners to these employers.
- Gaps do remain in this ecosystem.

Job Creation

- The City has been very successful in bringing new job opportunities to our residents.
- There is a lack of real estate product along some of our corridors.
- We need to identify new development opportunities for job location that will provide opportunity to adjacent residents.

Special Guest Scott Darnell gave an overview on peer city research around city contracting policy and workforce development in Denver, Nashville and Austin.

Economic Development staff will continue their work to develop a process to promote workforce development opportunities through City-funded programs and a policy to incorporate workforce development initiatives into programs which receive public investment.

Open for Business Update

Holly Eskridge provided an update on the Access to Capital initiative. To date, 1,825 awards totaling \$21,865,000 have been given out. Of those, 1,584 grants were given to micro businesses and 241 to small businesses. The Foundation for the Carolinas anticipates two to three additional award cycles. Ms. Eskridge also shared information on other initiatives including:

- Small Business Partner Support
- Thrive: Small Business Support
- Thrive Hiring Grant
- RENEW Training Program
- Workforce Partner Support Grants

Tracy Dodson finished the presentation with an update on the Thrive Budget and shared with the committee additional initiatives may be introduced. The City Manager will provide an update on additional recommendations.

Workforce & Business Development Committee 2020 Annual Reports

The Committee received the 2020 annual reports for the Charlotte International Cabinet and Public Art Commission as information only. No discussion was held.

The meeting adjourned at 3:31pm